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SIPDIS

AF/S FOR B. NEULING  
SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR C. COURVILLE

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SUBJECT: GOZ BURIES ANOTHER HERO

Classified By: Ambassador Christopher Dell for reasons 1.5 b/d

[11](#). (U) Minister of Indigenization and Empowerment and ZANU-PF Politburo member Josiah Tungamirai died on August 25 in a South African clinic reportedly of kidney failure. The GOZ quickly named him a national hero and buried him on August 28 at Hero,s Acre. According to local media accounts, Tungamirai had been plagued by kidney problems for at least the past five years ) he received a transplant from his brother in 2000. Retired General Solomon Mujuru, effective head of the dominant Zezuru ethnic sub-group clique, played an uncharacteristically public role in Tungamirai's funeral.

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COMMENT

[12](#). (C) The death of Zimbabwe's respected first black Air Force commander comes as a blow to the regime,s morale. Tungamirai's liberation war credentials, wide popularity, and relative youth (57) made him a pivotal ally of the Mujuru clique in historically divided Masvingo. His passing leaves retired General Vitalis Zvinavashe ) an Emmerson Mnangagwa ally also from Masvingo ) as the Zimbabwe,s most preeminent war hero and retired military officer.  
DELL